Sunday School ADVOCATE

J. D. FELTER - EDR.

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Reply to "A Dog's Letter."

DEAR SNIP: Your letter in the ADVOCATE of Jan. 23 awakens my sympathies. I think I see you turning over the waste-paper basket each day in your master's office, looking in vain for an ADVOCATE with a letter in it—"all to you."

So I think I must write you a letter, and I only regret that I cannot witness the scene when you find it.

I am sorry for you, Snip. You are a privileged dog in some respects, but you have a very small chance in life after all. "A cat may look on a king," but she doesn't wish to do that and nothing else. She is happier in a barn or attic, with a fair chance at the mice, than in a palace.

It is all very nice to have the range of an editor's sanctum, and see literary people, and hear the latest news and literary gossip; but what is a dog's life if he has nothing to do?

You are full of a strong desire to do something and be somebody. To be sure, your master may tell you to "take care of things" while he is out, but that doesn't mean *work*.

Let me tell you about a dog of my acquaintance —a *business* dog. You will admire, and, perhaps, envy him.

Spot belongs to a baker, and always acts as if he felt that his master's reputation and success in business depend upon him. He knows all regular customers at sight, and many of them by name, and when, at a busy time, his master says, "Spot, take this basket to Mr. Hunter's round the corner," Spot is off in a trice, and setting down the basket at Mr. Hunter's kitchen door, gives a short, sharp bark, which the cook understands.

"Does he ever put his nose into the basket?" you ask.

Never! Spot can look his master straight in the eye any day, for his character is without blemish. It is rather hard to send him out with a basket of steaming rolls before he has himself breakfasted, but thus far he has been proof against temptation.

Spot, in the intervals of business, takes his stand on the door-stone, and looks out for the covered wagon that carries his master's bread and pies through the town, and if there is any money to be returned for change he is very fond of being the bearer of it, and it would be quite unsafe for any one to attempt to rob him of it.

Spot is a happy dog. You can almost see him laugh sometimes when he has just done a smart thing, and the baker says, "Well done, Spot!"

Spot enjoys life because he is doing something to help others, and if he should be shut up in a

lady's boudoir or an editor's office, with nothing to do, I think he would sicken and die.

Now, Snip, I think you want an occupation. Can't you make your master understand that you are tired of a petted, do-nothing life, and that you want something to do? Find out where your master sends copy, and show him some day that you can deliver papers quite as well as the office boy. Keep your eyes open for opportunities, and, mark my word, you will some day find yourself—not famous, perhaps, but what is far better, *useful*.

M. A. L.

The Harvest Mouse.

THIS tiny creature is not quite five inches long, including the tail, which is two and a half inches in length. Mr. White in his "Natural History of Selborne," and Mr. Wood in his "Illustrated Natural History," give interesting descriptions of the nest made by these little animals. Mr. Wood says of a nest which he found: "It was built upon a scaffolding of four of the rank grass stems that are generally found on the sides of ditches, and was situated at some ten or eleven inches from the ground. In form it was globular, rather larger than a cricket ball, and was quite empty, having probably been hardly completed when the remorseless scythe struck down the scaffolding and wasted all the elaborate labor of the poor little architect. The material of which it was composed was thin dry grass of nearly uniform substance, and its texture was remarkably loose, so that any object contained in it could be seen through the interstices as easily as if it had been placed in a lady's open-worked knitting basket. There was no vestige of aperture in any part of it, so that the method by which it was constructed seems quite enigmatical.

"I am inclined to suppose that the little builder remained in its center while engaged in its construction, and after weaving it around her, pushed her way out through the loosely woven wall, and re-arranged the gap from the outside. It may be that the nest is the joint work of both sexes, the one remaining inside and plaiting the grass, while her mate brings fresh material, and consolidates the work from the exterior.

"Perhaps the young mice, when snugly packed into their airy cradle, may be fed by the mother from the exterior by making a temporary opening opposite each little one, and replacing the material when she proceeds to the next in succession. This is Mr. White's suggestion, and seems to be a very valuable one."

A VIRGINIA superintendent tells of a little fellow who, having no shoes to wear to Sunday-school, stained his bare feet black with green walnuts! Brave boy. But in latitudes where feelings go for more than looks, the boy's example will be hard to follow.

Stand up for the Right.

BY J. M. BAXTER.

"COME, Willie, get your pole and line and go with us to the river to-day," said Henry Ames, who seemed to be the leader of a gang of boys who were on their way to the river to fish. It was on a bright, beautiful Sunday morning, too. "What," my little readers may exclaim, "going a fishing on Sunday!" Yes, indeed, for they were all bad boys, and were always getting into trouble, and this morning they thought they would try and get Willie also to break the Sabbath, and get him into trouble, too.

"No, I can't go with you to-day, because it's Sunday, Henry, and I would not break the Sabbath, or miss my seat in the Sunday-school for all the world; besides, it would be committing a sin to do so, and our teacher—as well as the Bible—tells us we must never sin."

"O that's the way you always commence preaching to us about your religion. We don't care any thing for such stuff at all; we are just as good as you are, and we never go to Sunday-school, either. But we are going to have lots of fun to-day, and you had better come along. After we are tired of fishing we are coming home by old Boyle's orchard, and we'll get some good pears too. Come on; your daddy wont see you if you slip out the back way."

"I suppose, Henry, I could run away without *his* knowing it, but wouldn't *God* know it? We can't hide our wicked actions from him if we do from our parents, and now, boys, you had better take my advice and go to the Sunday-school instead of going a fishing, for you will get into trouble sure, if you don't."

"I believe Willie's advice is good," said three or four of the younger boys.

"*There*, you're turning cowards already, are you," said Henry to them. "Well, you can do just as you please, but I wouldn't be tied to my mother's apron string that way, I tell you. Come on, Perry, and James, we'll go anyway, and have our fun by ourselves."

On they went, in spite of Willie's entreaties. On arriving at the river every thing was calm and serene. So they got into a boat and started out from the shore. Presently the wind began to rise, and the waves rocked their little boat at a fearful rate. In their eagerness all this had come upon them before they scarcely knew it, and when they did realize their perilous position it was too late. A large wave came completely over the little craft carrying away their oars. So here they were, out on the angry waves, liable at any moment to sink into the water and no one near to rescue. Fortunately, however, the wind carried them toward the shore, which they reached at last and thus were saved. But even this was not sufficient to deter them from further wickedness. They were determined to add stealing to Sabbath-breaking; and just as Henry jumped over the tall fence into Mr. Boyle's orchard, a large, fierce dog laid hold of him in a furious manner. The other boys on hearing the noise on the inside took to their heels as fast as they could run. The people at the house, hearing the barking, ran to the spot and drove the dog away, but not until he had bitten Henry's arm in a terrible manner, and torn his clothes almost into strips. In this condition he was taken home to his parents. How bad they must then have felt at having trained up their child in an evil way.

Willie, and those whom his influence had saved, went to the Sunday-school. He took them into his class, and they soon became among the best scholars in school. One of them is now a missionary preaching to the heathen in Africa, and another is a useful minister of the Gospel in the city of N——. Henry went on from bad to worse until he was caught stealing money, and sent to prison for a long term of years.

The Poisonous Vine.

A PARABLE.

THERE was a man who owned a beautiful garden, in which were all kinds of sweet-blooming flowers, and songs of birds and running streams. One day he led his little daughter into the garden and said, "This beautiful garden is all mine; and

you may go anywhere you please, and pluck the sweetest flowers. But there is one vine that you must not touch. See! I have placed around it a fence, through which you must not pass." So she wandered about and plucked the flowers, and played on the soft green grass. But she thought

of the vine that was forbidden. She wondered what it was. So she concluded to go and take just one look at it. The leaves of it were green and red and golden, and it seemed to her she had never seen any thing so beautiful in all her life. She wished that she might take one of the leaves in her fingers. At last she crept under the fence and plucked some of the golden leaves. The vine

was the poisonous ivy, and the little girl was sadly poisoned. Her face swelled so that she was frightful to look at, and her eyes were shut tight, so that she could see nothing. Those were long, sad hours for poor Nellie. But she learned a good lesson, which was, that it is better *always to do right*.

W. O. C.

Friends' Mexican Mission Gazette.

THIS is the title of a small paper published at Brownsville, Texas, by the Friends, or Quakers, as they are commonly called. It is devoted to the promotion of religion among the Spanish-speaking as well as American populations—especially to their children. Here is a story taken from it:—

"Juan is a bright-eyed, smart little Mexican boy of about eight years, who has been attending our schools and meetings for some two or three months past. He very soon learned to sing our hymns, and took so much pleasure in it that he was continually reading his song-book and singing at home. His mother, who was a Catholic when we first became acquainted with her, did not like that he should read so much in a Protestant book, but one night last month we had a sudden thunder-storm, and the mother became very much frightened. She made Juan get up out of bed and get on his knees with his song-book and sing as loud as possible while she hid under the bed. As the storm stopped about that time she has great faith in Juan's hymn-book."

Sunday-School Advocate.

FEBRUARY 27, 1875.

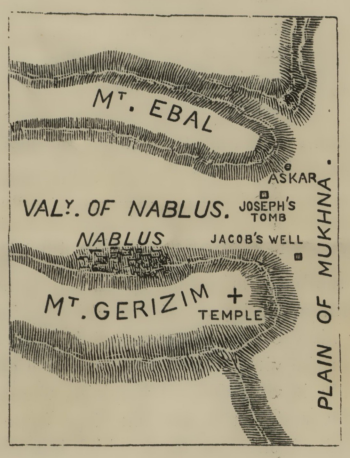
J. H. VINCENT, Editor.
ASSISTED BY
J. M. FREEMAN, and
MARY A. LATHBURY,
"Aunt May."

Shechem.

THE subject of the lesson for the seventh of March is "The Cities of Refuge." Two of these—Hebron and Shechem—are specially famous in Biblical History. The latter is particularly interesting at this time because of its relation to the lesson of February 14, as well as to that of March 7.

Shechem is mentioned in the Bible as far back as the time of Abraham, (see Gen. xii, 6,) where it is called Sichem. About a hundred and eighty years after this, Abraham's grandson, Jacob, bought some land here, and dug a well, which afterward became celebrated in the history of Christ. It was to Shechem that Joseph came to seek his brethren who were feeding their flocks, and it was only a few miles from this that he found them and was cruelly abused by them, being sold into slavery. Many years afterward his bones were brought from Egypt and were buried in Shechem.

The beautiful vale of Shechem lies between the two celebrated mountains, Ebal and Gerizim. The diagram will help the reader to understand the position of the



mountains and of the city. Ebal, the mount of cursing, was on the north, and Gerizim, the mount of blessing, was on the south, with the city at its foot. It has been said by some that the two mountains are so far apart that voices from the one could not be heard from the other; but this is a mistake. The valley is very narrow, and travelers have often shown, by actual experiment, that the voice can easily pass across it. Ebal is the higher of the two mountains, being 1,028 feet above the city, while Gerizim is 928 feet. But the city itself is 1,672 feet above the Mediterranean Sea, so that the top of Mount Ebal is 2,700 feet above the sea, while that of Mount Gerizim is 2,600 feet. We must not, however, suppose that the curses and blessings were given from the mountain tops, but rather from the sides, low down, near the valley.

This valley is said to be one of the most beautiful spots in Palestine. Springs from the mountain sides overflow and water it, making it green and fruitful. The modern city, which is called Nablous, consists of several streets, one above the other, on the sloping sides of Gerizim. It has beautiful and well-watered gardens, which produce oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and apricots. In these gardens are little Turkish arbors, shaded by fragrant orange trees, and surrounded with honeysuckle and clover.

The Cities of Refuge.

THIS is the subject of the lesson for the seventh of March. The Bible does not give us any minute description of the arrangements which were made for these cities; but learned Jewish writers say that all the roads leading to them were kept smooth and free from every thing that might hinder the manslayer in his attempts to

reach the place of safety. Every stream was bridged and the road was at least fifty feet wide. Wherever there was a turn in the road posts were put up having on them the words "*Refuge, Refuge,*" so that the man might be guided in his flight. If he succeeded in reaching the city he was safe, unless it could be proved that he had slain a man intentionally.

What these cities were to the manslayer, Christ is to the sinner. If we come to Jesus we are safe. He is our refuge. If we try to be saved in some other way we shall be lost.

The picture at the head of this page represents Hebron, originally called Kirjath-Arba, and the oldest town in Palestine. It was one of the six Cities of Refuge. The engraving shows only a part of the town as it now appears, the most conspicuous building being the celebrated mosque. This is thought to cover the Cave of Machpelah, the old burying-place of the patriarchs.

Berean Bulletin.—1875.

Sabbath, March 7.

1. Lesson:
THE CITIES OF REFUGE.
Josh. xx, 1-9.

2. Topic:
Refuge and Strength in Trouble.

3. Golden Text:
God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psa. 46. 1.

4. Home Readings:
M. Josh. xx.
Tu. Num. xxxv, 1-15.
W. Num. xxxv, 16-34.
Th. Psa. xlvi.
F. Acts xvi, 19-34.
S. Heb. ii.
S. Luke xxiii, 27-43.

Sabbath, March 14.

1. Lesson:
THE ALTAR OF WITNESS.
Josh. xxii, 21-27.

2. Topic:
Right Understanding among Brethren.

3. Golden Text.
Ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal. iii, 28.

4. Home Readings:
M. Josh. xxii, 1-20.
Tu. Josh. xxii, 21-34.
W. Gen. ix, 1-17.
Th. Exod. xii, 21-28.
F. Psa. cxxxiii.
S. Acts xi, 1-18.
S. Rom. viii, 1-17.

The Magic of Silence.

YOU have often heard "It takes two to make a quarrel." Do you believe it? I'll tell you how one of my little friends managed. Dolly never came to see Marjorie that there was not a quarrel. Marjorie tried to speak gently, but no matter how hard she tried Dolly, finally made her so angry that she would soon speak sharp words, too. "O, what shall I do?" cried poor little Marjorie.

"Suppose you try this plan," said her mamma. "The next time Dolly comes in seat yourself in front of the fire and take the tongs in your hand. Whenever a sharp word comes from Dolly gently snap the tongs *without speaking a word.*"

Soon afterward in marched Dolly to see her little friend.

It was not a quarter of an hour before Dolly's temper was ruffled and her voice was raised, and as usual she began to find fault and scold. Marjorie fled to the hearth and seized the tongs, snapping them gently.

More angry words from Dolly.

Snap went the tongs.

More still. *Snap.*

"Why don't you speak?" screamed Dolly in a fury. *Snap* went the tongs.

"Speak!" said she. *Snap* was the only answer.

"I'll never, never come again, never!" cried Dolly.

Away she went. Did she keep her promise? No, indeed. She came the next day, but seeing Marjorie run for the tongs she solemnly said if she would only let them alone they would quarrel no more for ever and ever.

SELMA.

Crumbs Worth Saving.

"Gather up the fragments . . . that nothing be lost."

. . . That which is not good is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite.
—*Milton.*

. . . Let us, then, be what we are, and speak what we think,
And in all things keep ourselves loyal to truth.
—*Longfellow.*

. . . Don't try to be happy. Happiness is a shy nymph, and if you chase her you will never catch her. But just go quietly on and do your duty, and she will come to you.—*Nolt.*

. . . If we would have powerful minds, we must think; if we would have faithful hearts, we must love; if we would have strong muscles, we must labor. These include all that is valuable in life.

. . . No stream from its source
Flows seaward, how lonely soever its course,
But some land is gladdened. No star ever rose
And set without influence somewhere. No life
Can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife,
And all life not be purer and nobler thereby.
—*Owen Meredith.*

. . . Art's a service, mark!
A silver key is given to thy clasp,
And thou shalt stand unwearied night and day,
And fix it in the hard slow-turning wards,
And open so that intermediate door
Betwixt the different plains of sensuous form
And form insensuous, that inferior man
May learn to feel on still, through these to those,
And bless thy ministrations.—*Mrs. Browning.*

. . . Do you wish to become rich? You may become rich, that is, if you desire it in no half way, but thoroughly. A miser sacrifices all to his single passion; hoards farthings, and dies possessed of wealth. Do you wish to master any science or accomplishment? Give yourself to it and it lies beneath your feet. Time and pains will do any thing. This world is given as the prize for the men in earnest; and that which is true of this world is truer still of the world to come.—*F. W. Robertson.*

The Bay Window

Dear girls and boys, we are beginning to know you by name. We are glad to see you, and though we are hoping all the time that you have come in to talk about the "L. L.," yet we are glad to welcome you, whatever may bring you into the Bay Window.

Here comes a bevy of "nut-crackers" saying that they have found the answer to Henry Marshall's riddle. We give a rhymed answer from one of our boys :—

Philo, Ill., *Jan.* 1, 1875.

The man who had that dwelling-place
Sought from the Lord to hide his face;
But God o'ertook him on the deep,
Where he had fallen fast asleep;
Then *lots* were cast to find out who
The troubler was among the crew.
So for three days he is made to dwell
Beneath the *waves*, in the belly of hell;
But he prayed to God, and the contrite man
Was then spewed out upon the land;
Jonah then obeyed his Lord's command,
And preached in Nineveh to every man.

J. Davison.

Grant Moran, of Ohio, objects to that line of the riddle which states that the dwelling was not in hell, and gives as his reason Jonah ii, 2. G. M. is not inclined to make allowance for figures of speech. Answers have been received from Freddie Vesehoff, Ella N. Godwin, Thomas C. Hopkins, Gertrude T. Giffin, David J. Cavenaw, M. F. Yorks, J. L. Cook, Hattie E. W., "A Reader," Lewis E. Landon, Lilly J. Mitchell, Effie R. Dean, A. E. V. J., Frank H. Lewington, and others.

We give you a more difficult task below. Let Cowper's Poems be taken from its place among the English poets in the library, and an hour or two among its pleasant pages will give you the answer to the following quotation acrostic, arranged by an English girl:—

The band of commerce was designed
To associate all the branches of mankind;
And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
Wise to promote whatever end He means,
God opens fruitful Nature's various scenes:
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers something to the general use.

The *initials* of the pieces from whence the following are taken, name the poem of which the above is an extract.

1. "Words learnt by rote a parrot may rehearse,
But talking is not always to converse."

2. "Men deal with life as children with their play.
Who first misuse, then cast their toys away."

3. "Stout he was and large of limb—
Scores have fled at sight of him;
And to all this fame he rose
Only following his nose."

4. "Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss;
What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss.
Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,
But short the date of all we gather here."

5. "Consult life's silent clock, thy bounding vein;
Seems it to say, 'Health here has long to reign?'"

6. "How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear."

7. "Time made thee what thou wast—king of the woods;
And time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in."

Ettie Langford.

We want, dear children, to find out what you are reading, and *how* you are reading it.

We will give a prize—a book—to that Sunday-school scholar sending us the best description of a Sunday-school book, its scenes, characters, and the lesson it teaches. The description must be confined to four pages of note paper, and the book must be one which has been read within three months. The decision will be made the first of June. We expect the older members of the Advocate family to make this trial.

St. Francis of Assisi.

BY AUNT MAY.

About six hundred years ago there lived a wild, pleasure-loving Italian boy, who, after a long illness, began to think of God, and of the life that had been given back to him. After his recovery he began a life of self-denial, giving the rich garments that he wore to the beggars in the street.

He thought that he saw visions, and heard voices from heaven commanding him to go "into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." So, throwing himself at the feet of his bishop, he renounced home, and parents, and wealth to go preaching "the Gospel to every creature," and thereafter, as his biographers write, "he lived as one who had cast away his life."

He preached to all classes of men, and lived so poorly that he often suffered from hunger, that he might give more for charity, and for the building of churches; and in his *call* to "preach the Gospel to every *creature*" he felt that it meant *every living creature*, and so he always showed a special tenderness toward the birds and beasts, and called them his brothers and sisters.

It is said that after giving himself to this life of self-denial, he went over the beautiful Umbrian mountains from Assisi to Gubbio, praising God in hymns, thanking him for the day, and the night, the water, and the birds, and the flowers, and saluting and blessing all creatures as his brothers and sisters in the Lord.

He would sometimes talk to a group of birds, telling them of God's care for them, and there are many legends in which a miracle is related in connection with some act of love and care for the lower creatures. He loved the doves, because of their gentleness and purity, and would rescue them from the market that he might make nests for them near his convent.

He loved the larks because they rose so near to heaven's gate with praise to God, and used to feed the young larks in their nests; and it is said that he once made friends with a grasshopper that sung on a fig-tree near his cell.

When he found worms and insects in his path he was careful not to tread upon them, and would remove them, lest they should be crushed by others.

Once he found a poor lone little lamb among a flock of goats, and it so reminded him of the Holy Lamb of God among the Jews and Pharisees that he longed to take it away with him. He had no money with which to buy it, but a good man, passing and seeing his grief, bought it and gave it to him. When he was at Rome, in 1222, he had a pet lamb that went with him every-where, and in the paintings of St. Francis (there are between forty and fifty) one may often find the lamb.

Perhaps many thought this gentle-hearted, child-like saint insane when he talked to dumb creatures nda cared for them; but he was only following in spirit his Master, who notes the fall of a sparrow, and who feeds the young lions and ravens when they hunger.

Counting the Fingers.

Davy, dear, your fingers hold;
Listen till my story's told.

Thumb's a rogue, and whispers "Come,
Let us steal the sweets," says Thumb.

Straight First Finger bends to hear;
She's a rogue when Thumb is near.

Second Finger says, "I'll go."
Cries Third Finger, "Count me too."

Little Finger stands alone,
Says, "The sweets are not our own."

Thumb says, "Let no Finger say,
Where the sweets have gone to-day."

Finger First cries out, "No, No!
Not a word from me shall go."

Finger Second shakes her head,
"She would suffer death instead."

Finger Third is full of fear,
Lest the marks of guilt appear.

Little Finger cries, "For shame!
I shall tell where lies the blame.

"If we all are made to smart,
With the rest I'll bear my part."

And I think that, through and through,
Little Finger's right—don't you?

—*Bright Side.*

Physical Benefit of the Sabbath.

The Sabbath is God's special present to the workingman, and one of its chief objects is to prolong his life and preserve efficient his working tone. In the vital system it acts like a compensation-pond; it replenishes the spirits, the elasticity, and vigor, which the last six days have drained away, and supplies the force which is to fill the six days succeeding; and in the economy of existence, it answers the same purpose as, in the economy of income, is answered by a savings bank. The frugal man who puts aside a dollar to-day, and another dollar next month, and who in a quiet way is always putting past his stated dollar from time to time, when he grows old and frail, gets not only the same dollar back again, but a good many dollars besides. And the conscientious man, who husbands one day of existence every week—who, instead of allowing the Sabbath to be trampled and torn in the hurry and scramble of life, treasures it devoutly up—the Lord of the Sabbath keeps it for him, and in length of days and a hale old age gives it back with usury. The savings bank of human existence is the weekly Sabbath.

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